



California Public Utilities Commission

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News Release

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PUC HAS UNLICENSED MOVER'S PHONE NUMBERS DISCONNECTED

SAN FRANCISCO, January 31, 2005 -- The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC), in its ongoing efforts to clamp down on illegal moving companies, had telephone service shut off to Pronto Moving Services, based in Hayward. An investigation by the Commission's Consumer Protection and Safety Division (CPSD) disclosed that owner, Marco Patino, has since April 2004 engaged in the business of transporting used household goods without holding a valid permit from the Commission authorizing such operations. Further, Pronto has used a bogus permit number "Lic # 131563," in its Yellow Page advertisements.

Despite CPSD staff's written and verbal directives to Patino to immediately cease operations, Patino continues to offer unlawful moves. In September 2004, staff received a consumer complaint alleging that Pronto advertised and offered moving services without a valid permit. Staff investigated and confirmed that Pronto continued to provide moving quotations. On January 20, 2005, CPSD staff obtained an order signed by a judge of the Superior Court of Alameda County, Hayward, to terminate the Pronto's telephone service. As of January 28, 2005, both numbers are disconnected.

Cutting off phone service has proven an effective tool for the PUC in curbing unlicensed companies and protecting the public.

Under Public Utilities (Pub.Util.) Code section 5133, no one may engage or attempt to engage in transporting household goods without a PUC license. Consumers using unlicensed movers may suffer irreparable losses of personal belongings with little means of recovery. Pub.Util. Code, Section 5322 authorizes the PUC to request a local phone company to cut off service to a carrier using the phone to operate illegally as a household goods carrier.

For more information, please visit the PUC's website at www.cpuc.ca.gov.

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